



COMIX WORLD III. January 1, 1979. Copyright Clay Geerdes, Box 7081, Berk., CA 94707. World Rights Reserved. Subs: \$6 for 24 issues, 10 for 48. Back issues available. Small ads: \$5-7.50. Logo by Bob Vojtko.* After the big Christmas rush, things are always slack in comix, but there is one new title, the second volume of Larry Gonick's HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSE. This one tells about the evolution of man and subsequent problems. Very witty.* IMAGINE 4 and STAR*REACH 15 held up by printer.* Brad Foster asked me which sex slicks carried comic strips. Nearly all of them picked up on Playboy's lead. Annie Fanny began in 1962 and by the end of the sixties Penthouse was serializing Wicked Wanda and Hustler was into Honey the Hooker. Vaughn Bodé's strips appeared in Dude, Gent, and Swank, then in Cavalier. Pages by Jeff Jones were in some of the same magazines. The early men's mags did not have comic strips, mainly because they were trying to justify their existence with intellectual hype. Esquire was the first successful mag of the type, beginning in 1933. Format was the same as contemporary Playboy. Esquire later shifted to a larger format a la LIFE or CHIC. It was early Esquire Hefner imitated in 1953 when he was putting together the pilot issues of Playboy. The first

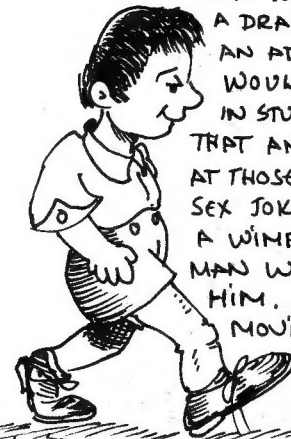
successful Esquire imitator was STAG in 1937. These early mags were full of cheesecake, full-page slick cartoons, short stories by "name" writers, and reproductions of paintings of nude women. It was Hefner and Kurtzman who broke with the anti-comics tradition. A lot of the sex slicks that don't carry comic strips today just can't afford the art rates.* An article on Bill Griffith's ZIPPY in Berkeley BARB 692 (January 4-17, 1979). Pro. Zippy as existential hero.

SUPERMAN was a law and order man all the way. After seeing the film at the North-point, I became so fascinated by this clean-cut, non-American boy from the planet Krypton that I went to Harold's Bookstore on Geary and bought, for a buck, a reprint of the original comic book, which sold in 1939 for a dime. Not only does the comic book tell the story of Superman with admirable clarity and economy — something you can't say about the movie — its opening pages provide a curious footnote to future tragedy. In the first episode, Clark Kent, in full Superman drag, captures the killer of a character named — Jack Kennedy!

SuperSchlock ~

Many critics have praised Superman because they do not give the material the same serious consideration they would that of another genre. They do not take the character seriously anymore than the writers of the film did. Evidently, they did not have confidence in Superman as a box office draw in spite of the fact that he has been a star since the early forties. Gimmicks and special effects have been used to distract the audience from a plot that is shallow, uneven, and full of tired out clichés. Everything is cut and dried in Superman. There is some excitement, but no real suspense and no sense of danger. The San Andreas fault idea was done much better in the Destroyer series in Dr. Quake. I think Superman has to be taken seriously and must face a credible villain. Hackman's Luthor is played more like The Prankster or Batman's arch-enemy The Penguin. He's such a funny, witty, and nice guy that one pulls for him to win. Superman is played as a stupid clod. Who cares if he drowns with a necklace of Kryptonite around his neck? He's played for laughs, and this is an insult to all of his fans who have followed his adventures over the years and know all of the background on him. What is Lois Lane doing living in a Manhattan penthouse apartment? What reporter can afford that? One minute Perry White is yelling at Jimmy Olsen about the \$40 a week he is paying him and a few minutes later we see him running around with a Nikon around his neck (a brand that didn't exist in Olson's time. He would not have used a 35mm camera at all in the thirties when news photographers all used graflex cameras and plate film). Clearly, the writers didn't know what time it was. If they were to update the film, why not use Morgan Edge instead of White? Why not have Lois and Clark working for television instead of the old Daily Planet? Why not deal with Clark's neuroses? As for Christopher Reeve, I thought he was funny as Kent, but badly miscast as Superman. He was always mugging, stiff, never really moving. The flying illusion was nice, but hardly enough to sustain the soap opera scenes between Kent and Lois. Dropping Lois in mid-flight was an act of sadism completely out of character for Reeve's Superman. (over)

"THAT SUPERMAN MOVIE WAS REALLY A DRAG. ONLY AN ADULT WOULD BELIEVE IN STUFF LIKE THAT AND LAUGH AT THOSE LAME SEX JOKES. WHAT A WIMP! THE BIONIC MAN WOULD TRASH HIM. WOW, IF A MOVIE EVER NEEDED DARTH VADER..."



MORE SUPER SCHLOCKOLA...

The mythology of the character which has accumulated and changed over the years should have been adhered to in the film. We all know it was Lois Lane who fell in love with and chased Superman and that he would have asked her for a date only in one of those fantasy-novels in Lois Lane. She would never have asked him what color her panties were.

As to Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster getting credit, they did on the film, but should have gotten it on the posters and other advertising. Maybe their karma is just catching up with them. After all, they borrowed a lot of the early stuff they used in their Superman stories from Philip Wylie and Edwin Balmer and never gave those writers any credit. The concept of Superman is completely Wylie's. It was taken whole from his 1930 novel Gladiator. Incidentally, it was Wylie who thought up the fortress of solitude and it was built by Hugo Danner, the superman-gladiator, as a place to retreat from the normal world of which he could never be a part. Danner was an athlete and a lover. He was de-sexed by Siegel and Shuster to fit the kid comic concept of the thirties. The exploding planet idea came from When Worlds Collide and After Worlds Collide. I'm not putting Siegel and Shuster down for their plagiarism. As Jules Feiffer has said in The Great Comic Book Heroes: everybody was swiping from everybody else in those days. Ideas and images in the popular area were up for grabs and it is likely that Wylie and his collaborator lifted their share from the old Gernsbach pulps.

In the new Superman film, there are so many mistakes, it would take a book to catalog them all. Where was the research staff? To do this kind of Science-fiction, one has to make the unbelievable believable, and that can't be done through parody and camp. It takes a character of heroic proportions to fill that big screen, not a wimp from a soap opera or a sitcom. How can one have any real sense of danger when there is no identification with the characters? What are we to think of a man who has the accumulated knowledge of millions of years (remember those crystals in Jor-El's space ship?) yet cannot solve the simple day-to-day conflicts which confront Kent? What brilliant mind thought of opening a film with a lot of charismatic actors like Trevor Howard and Marlon Brando and Suzanna York then shifting to a lot of sitcom routines? After the destruction of Krypton, the film goes straight downhill and



6/27/79

DID YOU SEE
THAT ARTICLE
ON MELINDA
GESSIE IN
JANUARY CHIC?

OR
TRINK'S
8-PAGES IN
HEAVY
METAL
FOR JAN. 7

READ
GEORGE
METZGER'S
ANSWER
TO
STAR WARS?

IT'S
MU, A
TALE OF
ATLANTIS
AND
FLYING SHIPS.

WATCH
FOR
FEVER PITCH 3

BABY FAT 3
+
MANY OTHER
WEIRD LITTLE
COMICS IN
1979.

CIRCUS
SQUADRON
IS

\$1.25 FROM
TOM FISHER
3637 TWILIGHT DR
TOPEKA, KS 66614
NICE ART. TOM
ALSO HAS
SOFT-BOILED FOR
\$1.00.

FANDOM
CIRCUS IS
125 pp FROM
RICH LISIUREA
BOX 943
CLIFTON, N.J.
07015

ART-4 FROM
CHRIS ROCK
PO BOX 14
WEST PINNS,
MO. 65775
FOR ONLY
ADINE AND
A 15-CENT STAMP

FROM CLAY -
WEIRD WAITRESS
BOOKS 1 & 2
A HUNTORE
DISCO MOUSE -
ALL FIVE FOR
\$2.00 OR 50¢ EA.

When I started college in 1958 at San Francisco State, the Civil Rights Movement was just getting underway. As the years passed, friends of mine went South to have some adventures and misadventures in places like Selma, Alabama, and Greenwood, Mississippi. The Movement began on December 1, 1955 when Mrs. Rosa L. Parks refused to sit in the back of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama, and it ended with the murder of Martin Luther King on April 4, 1968, in Memphis Tennessee. A lot of changes took place and, however you felt about the racial situation, you'll be interested in Howell Raines' excellent book of interviews, MY SOUL IS RESTED. Raines spent several years tracking down all of the people, black and white, who were a part of this social change. All speak in their own words. The collection is now available from Bantam in paperback. \$2.95. -Clay Geerdes

Camping Out for The Grateful Dead

By Katy Butler

About half a dozen devoted "deadheads" who paid \$30 a ticket, lied to their bosses and travelled thousands of miles, plan to camp for five days outside Winterland for the best seats New Year's Eve with their beloved Grateful Dead.

As they joked and drank at the corner of Post and Steiner streets, they swore it was worth it to see Winterland's last rock n'roll concert, the official funeral of an era that stopped breathing years ago.

"It's an event — the closing of Winterland," said Steve Kwartin, 21, of St. Louis, while his sleeping bag held his place near the front of the line. Behind him stretched a line of punk rockers waiting for tonight's Tubes, concert.

Others who had dumped their backpacks in front of the scruffy former wrestling hall and ice palace said they'd flown in from as far as Alaska and New York to go to the sold-out concert.

Promoter Bill Graham, who said he is closing the rock hall to devote himself to 30,000-seat coliseum events, said hundreds of deadheads from Tokyo, Miami and Boston fruitlessly pleaded in vain for tickets and said they were prepared to charter planes to get here.

"Deadheads are the people who do more than just go to concerts," explained Burke Barrett, 19, a self-professed deadhead who was nine when Haight-Ashbury bloomed and the Dead played in the street.

"They're the ones who go to both concerts when the Dead plays two dates. They're the ones who know to yell out, 'LIVING ON REDS, VITAMIN C AND COCAINE,' when the band gets to that part in 'Trucking.'"

"I know one guy who sold his van to go to the Dead concert at the pyramids in Egypt. That's dedication."

never lives up to any of the promises made by the years of advance advertising. The dressing is better than the turkey. Reeve had all the personality of one of those animatronic dolls that narrate the shows in Disneyland. Hackman clowning his way through Luthor. Compare this with the way Darth Vader terrorized the audience when he first appeared onscreen in STAR WARS. It's no wonder all we heard about SUPERMAN was how much money it was costing. In my opinion, Brando was underpaid. Everything that comes after his scenes is anti-climactic and disappointing. You know with STAR WARS the promotional stuff came after the film and people wanted it because the film was so good, but with the over-hype SUPERMAN has had for the past few years, well, how could it possibly live up to the expectations created? To me, the ad campaign sucked. "You will believe a man can fly." Nobody ever doubted that Superman could fly. SUPERMAN was cynically conceived and I found it insulting and condescending, a perversion of a fantasy I've grown up with and enjoyed. The action in this film should have transcended that of an episode of THE BIONIC MAN and it doesn't anymore than the humor is equal to that on THREE'S COMPANY. Funny, isn't it? Warner Brothers owns National Periodicals and has access to some fine comic scripters, yet they go out and hire writers who don't know the material and insult both established characters and the fans. No comic book editor would have passed on the continuity in that SUPERMAN fiasco.